



4-LANE DHAKA-BHANGA EXPRESS HIGHWAY BUILT WITH BSRM XTREME

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GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES

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SHAH CEMENT

A curious list for old-age allowance

Names of dead people on it; many below the required minimum age getting benefit

MIN TU DESHWARA

Forty-three-year-old Khairun Begum, a resident of Hajipur union in Moulvibazar, has been getting old-age allowance over the last few years.

But the minimum age limit is 65 for men and 62 for woman to be entitled for the allowance, as per the government rules.

The Daily Star has got a copy of the list of Hajipur union under Kulaura upazila. There are 722 names in the list and Khairun's serial number is 272.

Lakshmi Rani, 41, Malakar is also listed for the allowance. Her serial number is 647.

Like Khairun and Lakshmi, at least 30 persons have been included in the list before reaching their age limit. Even, allowances are being withdrawn in the name of some dead persons.

Ummar Ali of Ranchap village had been getting the allowance for around seven years. He died around 16 months ago when he was 63, but his name is still on the list and someone is taking his allowance regularly. His serial number is 189, said Abdul Aziz, a neighbour.

Gopesh Chandra Malakar died around 18 months ago when his age was 44. He had been receiving old-age

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Grabbing the land of the Turag river along Mirpur-Ashulia-Beribandh road, traders pump in sand although there is a signboard, inset, that strictly forbids sand trading on the spot. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

RMG worker gang-raped in N'ganj

5 arrested; 2 more raped in Jashore, Faridpur

STAR REPORT

Five youths were arrested in connection with the gang-rape of a garment worker in Narayanganj yesterday.

In a case filed with Fatullah Model Police Station, the 18-year-old victim said she was waiting for a boat at Pagla ghat to cross the Buriganga around 1:15am yesterday after finishing her work at a factory in BSCIC Industrial Area, said Sanjay Kumar Sarkar, inspector (operation) of Fatullah Police Station.

Seven youths abducted her, took her to a nearby secluded place, and raped her, the police official said.

Police, raiding different areas in Pagla, arrested five of them until yesterday afternoon, the inspector said.

During primary interrogation, the youths admitted raping the girl, SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Putin critic in coma after 'poisoning'

REUTERS, Moscow



ALEXEI NAVALNY

Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny was in a coma in a Siberian hospital yesterday after drinking a cup of tea that his spokeswoman said she believed was laced with poison.

A fierce critic of President Vladimir Putin, Navalny started feeling ill when returning to Moscow from Tomsk in Siberia by plane on Wednesday morning. He was carried off the plane on a stretcher after it made an emergency landing at Omsk.

He was in intensive care and on an artificial lung ventilator in an Omsk hospital, his spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh said.

"We assume that Alexei was poisoned with something mixed into his tea. It was the only thing that he drank in the morning. Alexei is now unconscious," Yarmysh said.

Doctors gave contradictory information about his condition, saying it had stabilised but also that there was still a threat to his life and they were working to

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangabandhu reaches Geneva

August 21, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU IN GENEVA

Following his gallbladder surgery on July 31, Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman flies to Geneva on a chartered plane from London today for convalescence in Switzerland as a guest of the Swiss Government. Bangabandhu is greeted on his arrival in Geneva by the Swiss observer at the UN Ambassador Umberto. In London, before the prime minister's plane took off, a Bangladeshi spokesman says that Bangabandhu would not be willing to meet Pakistan President ZA Bhutto without formal recognition of Bangladesh by Pakistan. Informed sources, however, say that efforts are underway to bring about a meeting of the two leaders through their common friends not connected with the Pakistani administration.

Bangladesh officials inform that the length of the prime minister's stay in Geneva would depend on the advice of his doctors but it is thought that he would be in Switzerland for about two weeks. Meanwhile, Bangladesh envoys to Paris, Bonn, Stockholm, East Berlin, Moscow, Warsaw and Belgrade are converging in Geneva for the conference of the Bangladesh envoys to the European countries. Bangabandhu will address the conference.

PAK APPEAL TO THE UN

Pakistan asks the UN Security Council today to disregard

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



FRAUD CASE

Ex-Trump aide Steve Bannon arrested

AFP, New York

Former top Trump aide Steve Bannon was arrested yesterday and charged along with three others for defrauding hundreds of thousands of donors in a Mexico border wall fundraising campaign -- a blow to the Republican incumbent.

The online crowdfunding campaign known as "We Build the Wall" raised more than \$25 million, prosecutors said, which the defendants said would be used on construction but was instead used for their own profit.

The arrest is the latest in a string of high-profile legal battles faced by members of Trump's inner circle as the Republican runs for re-election in November.

Manhattan federal prosecutors said Bannon, the organization's founder

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Chocolate snow falls on Swiss town



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Residents of a Swiss town got a bit of a shock when it started snowing particles of fine cocoa powder after the ventilation system at a chocolate factory malfunctioned.

The Lindt & Spruengli company confirmed local reports on Tuesday that there was a minor defect in the cooling ventilation for a line for roasted "cocoa nibs" in its factory in Olten, between Zurich and Basel.

The nibs, fragments of crushed cocoa beans, are the basis of chocolate.

Combined with strong winds on Friday

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Rejoinder

Md Mostafa Kamal, additional secretary of the health ministry, has objected to a report published in The Daily Star on August 20 under the headline "Govt set to okay rapid testing". In a rejoinder yesterday, he said the report contained some "exaggerating and confusing" words which might create confusion. Mostafa also said he spoke on the process of finalising the "draft of Covid-19 laboratory testing regulation", which was interpreted as the government's decision to use rapid testing kits. No such decision was taken, SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 21

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-25 12-30 4-45 6-38 8-00
JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-41 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



A plaintive cuckoo is spotted sitting on a tree branch on Begum Rokeya University campus in Rangpur. This small bird is seen almost everywhere in the country. It feeds on invertebrates and lays its eggs in other birds' nests.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TUHIN WADUD

Europe can fight virus without lockdowns

Says WHO; S Korea fears fresh outbreak as India records nearly 70,000 new cases in a day

AGENCIES

Europe can combat the coronavirus without full lockdowns now that authorities are better prepared and have gained knowledge about how to fight it in recent months, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said yesterday.

"With the basic nationwide and additional targeted measures, we are in a much better position to stamp out these localised virus flare-ups," the head of the WHO's European branch, Hans Kluge, told reporters.

"We can manage the virus and keep the economy running and an education system in operation," he added.

Europe has seen a steady rise in the number of cases for the past two months, he said.

In the first week of August, 40,000 more cases were reported than in the first week of June when cases were at their lowest.

"But we are not in February, we can manage the virus differently now than we did when Covid-19 first emerged," Kluge said.

In addition to calling for good hand hygiene, social distancing measures and national testing and tracing programmes, the WHO recommended that additional

measures be adopted locally when clusters arise.

On average, 26,000 new cases are being reported everyday in Europe, according to the WHO. Young people, who tend to experience milder symptoms and lower mortality rates, account for a growing share of cases.

However, Kluge stressed the importance of reopening schools as countries gradually return to normal, noting the negative consequences that school closures have had on children.

In South Korea, authorities said coronavirus infections are back "in full swing" and spreading nationwide after members of a church attended a political demonstration, threatening one of the world's Covid-19 success stories.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) reported 288 new cases as of midnight on Wednesday, marking a week of triple-digit daily increases, although down slightly from the previous day's 297.

"This is a grave situation that could possibly lead to a nationwide pandemic," Vice Health Minister Kim Gang-lip told a briefing.

Without aggressive contact tracing, SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

